

Maundy Thursday



St. Mark's At Home

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ST. MARK'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome to St. Mark's At Home! This packet is our effort to help you bring worship and spiritual formation into your home. It is a menu to choose from, not an outline to follow from beginning to end. We know the merry-go-round of some households are operating at break-neck speeds of stress while others have twiddled beyond thumb and index finger to previously unknown depths of boredom.

This is offered as a gift, with no strings or expectations, and not meant to be a burden. Some resources are recommended for specific ages, some are for all; some will change each week, some things will stay the same. Choose what is a gift to you wherever you are right now and ignore the rest. We are all in this together.

What's Inside

- Gathering: Suggestions for Virtual Worship
- Suggestions for Maundy Thursday at Home
- Prayers and Suggestions for your Table
- Youth and Children
- Music and Arts

Gathering (Suggestions On Preparing for Virtual Worship)

Worship is intended for in-person gatherings in physical space, which is why it is not easy or natural to worship virtually. Our brains and bodies encounter screens in very different ways than our brains and bodies encounter physical spaces. So while we wait; while we rightfully long to gather in-person for worship once again, here are a few practical suggestions for engaging virtual expressions of worship in the meantime:

- On whatever device you're watching on, take a few moments to shut down all other running programs and applications. Temporarily disable your push notifications. Place your phones in another room on silent or Do Not Disturb mode.
- Wash your hands and face, like an Old Testament temple priest. Today we are washing our hands to stay healthy, but it is also a way of signaling through your senses that you are preparing to worship.
- Light a candle--a symbol of Christ's presence with you wherever you are. You can even prepare a small home chapel. Clean off a table. Set out a cross. You are not alone even if you are alone.
- Take a few deep breaths and say a short prayer to prepare your heart to "enter" a different kind of space. We recommend the Collect for Purity:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Suggestions For Maundy Thursday

Foot Washing

In the Gospel of John, after washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus says, “So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet” (John 13:13). Maundy Thursday is the space the Church has carved out for us to observe this commandment. We encourage you to wash the feet of the people in your household. If you are alone, you can wash your own feet, knowing that the saints and angels surround you as you do. If you are connected to another person by phone or computer, pray aloud for them as they wash their feet, and ask them to pray for you.

You will need a pitcher or large cup of warm water, a large bowl or basin, and a few clean towels.

Have someone begin with this call to foot washing:

Fellow servants of our Lord Jesus Christ: On the night before his death, Jesus set an example for his disciples by washing their feet, an act of humble service. He taught that strength and growth in the life of the Kingdom of God come not by power, authority, or even miracle, but by lowly service. Therefore, I invite you who share in the royal priesthood of Christ to share in this practice and to embody this habit. Remember his words that what will be done for us is also to be done by us to others, for “a servant is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

Now the people wash one another’s feet, or their own feet. You are encouraged to pray silently or aloud for the person whose feet you are washing, and for those who are physically absent.



Prayers and Suggestions for Your Table

Maundy Thursday Agape Meal

Maundy Thursday is a feast with a dual purpose. It is the day of foot washing but it is also the day where we celebrate and commemorate The Last Supper. “Maundy” comes from the Latin “Maundatum” -- which we translate as “commandment” (think “mandate”), a reference to Jesus words at the last supper: “I give you a new commandment...” Since we are unable to gather to celebrate Eucharist together this year, another related Maundy Thursday tradition that is especially appropriate in this season of household isolation is the Agape Meal, or Love Feast. Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians gathered for simple meals to have fellowship and remember The Last Supper. In fact, it is from these meals that the Eucharist was developed as a separate rite.



The Agape Meal should be simple, and meatless if possible. Bread and wine (or nonalcoholic alternative) and food is served to each person at the table. The following prayers can be led by different people around the table, on the phone, or over video chat.

Blessing Over Wine

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and on this night you have refreshed us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing Over Bread

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and on this night you have given us the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayers and Suggestions for Your Table

Blessing Over the Other Foods

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and forever. Amen.

The gathered people then enjoy a meal together. At the end of the meal, the liturgy concludes with the clearing of the table and *In Monte Oliveti*.

Clearing of the Table

After the meal, the table should be cleared quickly and quietly. Save the dishes until after the service. Extinguish the candles, and those gathered should return to the table in silence. This represents the stripping of the altar that happens at the end of the Maundy Thursday service.

Those who have dined then recite the following as a tribute to the Maundy Thursday vigil that would happen in the church:

In monte Oliveti

Leader: On the Mount of Olives our Lord Jesus Christ prayed to the Father.

Response: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Leader: Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation.

Response: The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.



Resources for Children and Youth

CHILDREN

A word to families: things that are homemade are imperfect, which makes them all the more precious. Pulling off a flawless home worship with young children is challenging, and I encourage you to release the urge for perfection, and focus on creating space for something truly special to happen in this “homemade” Maundy Thursday. Here are some simple suggestions:

- Grab some butcher paper and markers/crayons, or a large piece of fabric and fabric markers. (You can also simply give each family member a sheet of construction paper to do their own drawing.)
- Have everyone trace the outline of their feet, helping one another as needed; then color them in. As you draw, talk about what Jesus and his disciples talked about in the upper room.
- Tell your children about Jesus’ “new commandment” to love one another. Ask them what love looks like. What are some ways that we can show love to each other? List a few. They can even draw heart shapes around the outlines of their feet while you talk.
- Say, “You’re probably wondering what love has to do with feet.” Explain that in Jesus’ day, people walked on dusty roads to travel, and their feet got dirty. It was important to have your feet washed when you came into a house, but it was a job that no one wanted to do. Jesus showed his disciples how much he loved them by washing their dirty, smelly feet.
- Say, “Jesus said we can also show others how much we love them by washing their feet.” Grab your water, soap, and towels, and begin by washing your children’s feet. They may squirm or giggle or laugh -- that’s okay. They may be eager to wash the feet of a sibling, or they may want to wash your feet or their doll’s feet or their pet’s feet. Allow them to take the initiative and guide accordingly.



When the washing is finished, say this prayer (from [Little Way Chapel](#)):

Dear Jesus, you loved your disciples so much that you not only washed their feet, but you died on the cross for them--and for us, too. Help us to love others like you did, so that when others look at us, they will know that we are your disciples. Amen

Resources for Children and Youth

CHILDREN *(continued)*

- **An idea for a bedtime story** - Since Jesus and the Twelve were celebrating Passover on the night of the Last Supper, tell the stories “God to the Rescue!” and “God Makes a Way” from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* before bed. (Or find the story of Moses/the Exodus in any other children’s bible.).
- **Two digital resources** - “The Servant King” chapter from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* is also available as a 3-minute video on [YouTube](#), and the [We Wonder podcast](#) is sharing a 10-15 minute episode for Maundy Thursday.

YOUTH

Families with older children and youth: encourage them to join in with the online service and the foot-washing with the rest of the family. Youth in particular may not be enthusiastic participants; still, ask if you may wash their feet.

- This practice is about demonstrating Christ’s love, not about eliciting a particular reaction.
- Allow your youth/child to sit with this experience, and give them space to consider what they might do in response. (It would be wise to suspend screen time privileges for all family members for the duration of this time of worship! Turn all of your phones off and put them in another room.)

Music and the Arts

MUSIC

Listening to Brahms in Holy Week

The music of German Romantic composer Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) is especially comforting in times such as these.

If you have time to listen to some of the most exquisite sacred music ever written, check out this recording of *A German Requiem* available for free on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08qM54vEvLw>

Brahms's *Requiem* is special because rather than use the traditional Latin liturgical texts, he chose to set verses from scripture that he found deeply meaningful.

1. *Selig sind, die da Leid tragen* Blessed are they that mourn (Matthew and Psalms)
2. *Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras* For all flesh is as grass (1 Peter, James, and Isaiah)
3. *Herr, lehre doch mich* Lord, teach me (Psalms and Wisdom)
4. *Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen* How lovely are thy dwelling places (Psalms)
5. *Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit* You now have sorrow (John, Isaiah, and Sirach)
6. *Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt* For here we have no abiding place (Hebrews, 1 Corinthians, Revelation)
7. *Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben* Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord (Revelation)

If you only have time to listen to one track, check out number 6. This is especially appropriate for Eastertide and absolutely thrilling:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZD3yKxeCmW4>

For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Music and the Arts

In addition to massive sacred works like his *Requiem*, Brahms wrote a set of *Eleven Chorale Preludes* for organ in 1896. In the previous years he had lost many of his closest friends, including Clara Schumann, who had died in May. The grueling forty-hour journey which he undertook to attend her funeral took its toll on his own health; the cancer that would end his life in April of the following year was already far advanced, and he spent much of his time putting his affairs in order.

It is intensely private music, and while certain of the chorales he chose consider death, the collection is not exclusively about endings. Even in the pieces about death, the emphasis is on the bliss and transcendence which will come beyond mortal life. These were to be his final compositions. His prelude *O God, To Whom We Turn* be heard at the Maundy Thursday service; and his prelude on *O Sacred Head* will be heard on Good Friday.



Music and the Arts

ART

Spend some time meditating on the image below. Begin by listing all the things you notice. Don't rush to interpretation.



Jesus Washing Peter's Feet by Sadao Watanabe. Printed with permission.

Music and the Arts

Only after you have spent some time writing out your list of observations, begin asking yourself questions like the following:

- Why did the artist decide to make the image this way instead of that way? Why did they include this detail instead of that one? In what ways is the artist telling this story in a new way than I've heard before? Who might all the characters in the image be? Who or what is missing from this image?
- Finally: What might God be inviting me to consider through this image?

On the following page, is an art piece created for our congregation by St. Mark's parishioner Christie Stockstill, titled *The Last Supper*. This piece is primarily ink and water color, on mixed media paper.

“The piece I created for Maundy Thursday is primarily focused on Jesus’ last meal with the apostles. There are already many artistic interpretations of this important meal. In creating my own version I drew upon Leonardo da Vinci’s placement, positioning and body language of Jesus and the apostles in his painting, *The Last Supper*. As in all of the pieces I’m creating for this series, eyes fill in for whole bodies, and people may share noses and mouths. There is also one hand, which I see as belonging to Jesus, and one foot, perhaps belonging to Peter but that could also symbolize Christ’s humble nature.” - Christie



Using the same process as the first art piece, take time to study and list your thoughts, and then proceed with the same questions (above).

Music and the Arts



The Last Supper, commissioned by St. Mark's, created by parishioner Christie Stockstill, is part of a Holy Week Series